

INL News Release
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INL's Sharpe wins national fusion engineering honor

IDAHO FALLS – J. Phillip Sharpe, group leader for Idaho National Laboratory's Fusion Safety Program, has been selected to receive a top honor by the Fusion Power Associates Board of Directors.

Sharpe will receive the 2008 Excellence in Fusion Engineering Award today at the Fusion Power Associates annual meeting in Livermore, Calif. The award, established in 1987 in memory of MIT Professor David J. Rose, has been given annually since that time to recognize individuals in the relatively early part of their careers who have shown both technical accomplishment and potential to become exceptionally influential leaders in the fusion field.

In his selection for the honor, the FPA Board noted his many technical accomplishments, including "key research on plasma-materials interactions, tritium behavior in materials and inertial fusion blanket design; and your leadership in the important area of fusion reactor safety."

Sharpe was selected based in part on a letter of recommendation from David Petti and supporting letters from Rion Causey and Kathryn McCarthy.

In recommending Sharpe for the honor, Petti noted that since joining the INL Fusion Safety Program seven years ago, Sharpe has been given increasingly progressive levels of responsibilities. "He initially took over our very successful tokamak dust characterization work and made progress with that, then he initiated dust experiment design and modeling tasks. After that, he started the refurbishment and restoration of Rion Causey's Tritium Plasma Experiment, which was relocated to Idaho from another lab. This may not sound like a difficult task, but much of the experiment required parts replacement, rebuilding key components, tritium decontamination and system operations testing at INL. The work was carried out under radiological protection conditions due to the tritium contamination; it required several years of Phil's time and effort, and that of others in Idaho that he led, to get the TPE operational again. It is today operational and providing key information on tritium behavior in plasma facing materials."

Sharpe is a graduate of North Carolina State University, where he received bachelor's of sciences degree in nuclear engineering and a B.S. in physics, both in 1995, and a Ph.D. in nuclear engineering in 2000. He first came to INL in the summer of 1995 as a student research assistant in the Fusion Safety Program and again in 1999, before being selected as a postdoctoral fellow in the Fusion Safety Program in 2000. He joined INL in 2001 as a staff scientist/engineer in the Fusion Safety Program. In addition to leading the Fusion Safety Program and Safety and Tritium Applied Research (STAR) User Facility, he manages the Thermal Science and Safety Analysis Department in the INL Nuclear Science and Technology Directorate.

He is the son of Ray and Sandra Sharpe of Reidsville, N.C.

Sharpe is the third INL researcher to win this award. Previous recipients are Steve Piet in 1987 and Kathryn McCarthy in 1994.

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